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BILL WILLINGHAM | LAN MEDINA | STEVE LEIALOHA

LEGENDS IN EXILE

SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

FABLES

DIRECT SALES

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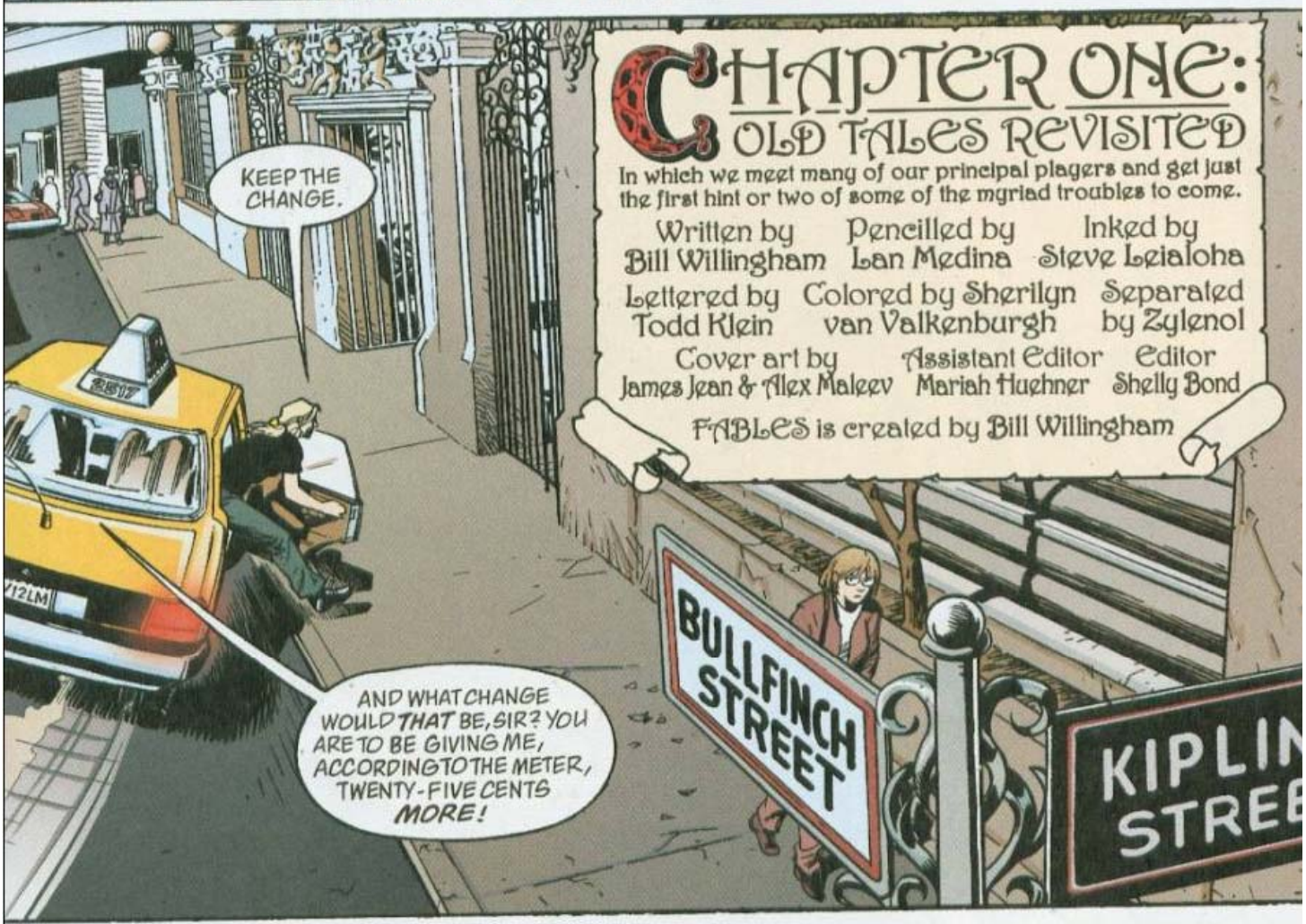
ONCE UPON A TIME...
HURRY!
IN A FICTIONAL LAND CALLED NEW YORK CITY.
CAN'T YOU GO FASTER?
CAN'T YOU PLEASE TO BE HOLDING ONTO YOUR WATER, SIR? YOU ARE VERY MUCH TO BE MAKING ME A NERVOUS DRIVER.


KEEP THE CHANGE.
AND WHAT CHANGE WOULD THAT BE, SIR? YOU ARE TO BE GIVING ME, ACCORDING TO THE METER, TWENTY-FIVE CENTS MORE!
BULLFINCH STREET
KIPLIN STREE

CHAPTER ONE: OLD TALES REVISITED

In which we meet many of our principal players and get just the first hint or two of some of the myriad troubles to come.

Written by Bill Willingham
Pencilled by Lan Medina
Inked by Steve Leialoha
Lettered by Todd Klein
Colored by Sherilyn van Valkenburgh
Separated by Zylenol
Cover art by James Jean & Alex Maleev
Assistant Editor Mariah Huehner
Editor Shelly Bond

FABLES is created by Bill Willingham

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The Woodland Luxury Apartments
MY GOODNESS, IF IT ISN'T JACK, OF ALL THE PEOPLE I DIDN'T EXPECT TO SEE TODAY. WE HAVEN'T SEEN YOU AROUND HERE IN A GOOD LONG TIME, SIR.
HI, JOHNNY.
JACK!
HOW ARE YOU, BUDDY?
NO TIME!
MANAGEMENT OFFICES

BUSINESS OFFICE
S. WHITE
BIGBY!
SECURITY OFFICE
B. WOLF
YOU LOOK OUT OF BREATH, JACK. BEEN CLIMBING BEANSTALKS AGAIN?
huh...huh... NO.
BLOWN DOWN ANY PIGGIES' HOMES LATELY?
I'M A BIT BUSY, JACK. DID YOU RUN ALL THE WAY OVER HERE JUST TO TRADE VERBAL BARBS, OR IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE YOU NEED?
THERE WAS-- THERE IS--A TERRIBLE THING-- A CRIME--
A TERRIBLE THING HAPPENED!

BUSINESS OFFICE S. WHITE
THE ONLY PROBLEM THAT DIRECTLY CONCERNS THIS OFFICE IS HOW BEASTLY YOU LOOK, AND HAVE BEEN LOOKING RECENTLY.
ITH NOTH MY FAUT! ITH THAT ANCHUNT CURTH AGAIN!
IT DITHAPPEARED WHEN MY WIFE AGWEED TO MAHWEE ME WAY BACK WHEN, BUTH NOW ITH COMTH AND GOETH.
SEE? I TOLD YOU HE'D BLAME ME!
EM NOT BWAYMING YOU, MY THWEET, BUT I THEEM TO TURN BACK TO A BEETHD, TO THE EXTHENT THAT YOUWH MAD ATH ME.
THIS WOULD BE EASIER, LORD BEAST, IF I COULD UNDER-STAND YOU BETTER.
HE SAID THAT HIS CURSE REASSERTS ITSELF TO THE EXTENT THAT I BE-COME MAD AT HIM.
SNOW WHI
DIRECTOR OF OPERA
BUT YOU TRY BEING MARRIED FOR ALMOST A THOUSAND YEARS WITHOUT A FEW UPS AND DOWNS ALONG THE WAY.
NO ONE CAN BE PERFECTLY, BLISSFULLY HAPPY AND IN LOVE FOR SO LONG.
ITH THITH TWANZITHONAL PEWEIOD THATH THE PWOBWEM. MY FANGTH HAB GWOAN IN BUT MY MOUTH HATHENT GWOAN BIG ENOUGH TO FITH THEM YET.
THO I THPEKE FUNNY.
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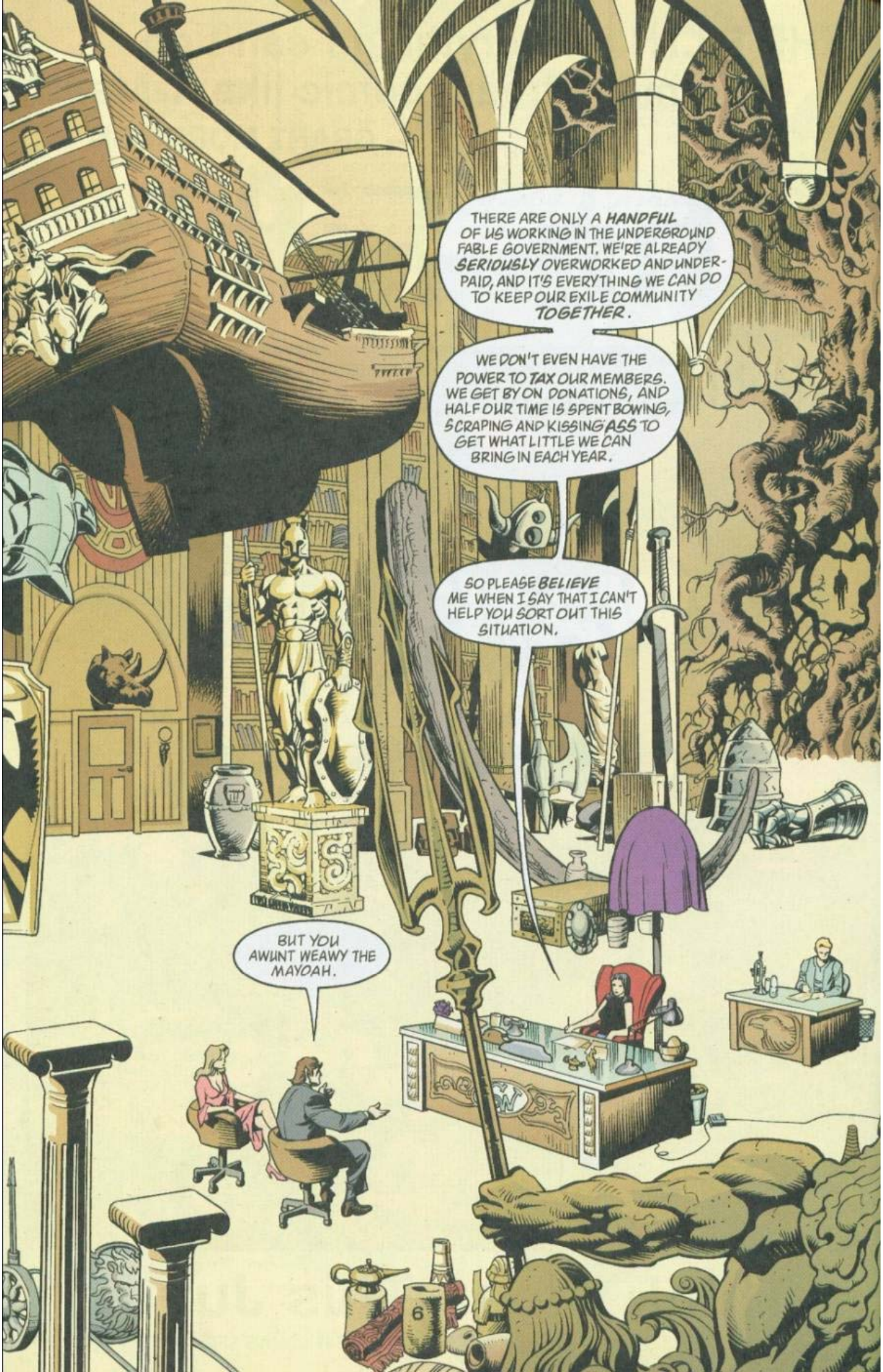
AS SORRY AS I AM FOR YOUR MARITAL "DIFFICULTIES," IT ISN'T ANY OF MY BUSINESS. WE BARELY HAVE ENOUGH MONEY AND MANPOWER TO RUN THE MOST BASIC OF UNDERGROUND GOVERNMENT SERVICES.
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO DO MARITAL COUNSELING, AND TO BE PERFECTLY CANDID, I WOULDN'T ALLOW IT IF WE COULD.
THE MUNDANES MAY LOOK TO THEIR GOVERNMENT TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS, BUT IN THE FABLE COMMUNITY, WE EXPECT YOU TO BE ABLE TO RUN YOUR OWN LIVES.
OUR ONLY CONCERN IS THAT YOU'RE CURRENTLY IN VIOLATION OF OUR MOST VITAL LAW: NO FABLE SHALL, BY ACTION OR INACTION, CAUSE OUR MAGICAL NATURE TO BECOME KNOWN TO THE MUNDANE WORLD.
SNOW WHITE
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
IF YOU CAN'T MAINTAIN A NORMAL HUMAN APPEARANCE OR PURCHASE A CONCEALING GLAMOUR FROM ONE OF OUR WITCHES--
--OUR RULES MANDATE THAT YOU BE RELOCATED UPSTATE TO THE FARM, WHERE ALL THE OTHER NONHUMAN FABLES LIVE.
BUT WE DIDN'T ESCAPE FROM THE HOMELANDS WITH OUR FORTUNE INTACT! WE CAN'T AFFORD A GLAMOUR POWERFUL ENOUGH TO HIDE MY HUSBAND'S CURSE. WE BARELY MAKE ENOUGH BETWEEN US TO GET BY.
UND ITH THOTH THAME MONEY TWUBBLES THAT EXATHERBATHES OWAH MAWITAL PWOBWEMS AND MAKTH THE CURTH COME BACK.
AS SYMPATHETIC AS I AM TO YOUR TROUBLES, I CAN'T BE OF ANY HELP TO YOU.
MANY OF THE FABLES--I'D EVEN SAY MOST OF US--LOST OUR LANDS, TITLES AND FORTUNES WHEN WE WERE FORCED OUT OF OUR HOMELANDS BY THE ADVERSARY.
WE HAVE TO MAKE DO AS BEST WE CAN.
SNOW WHITE
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

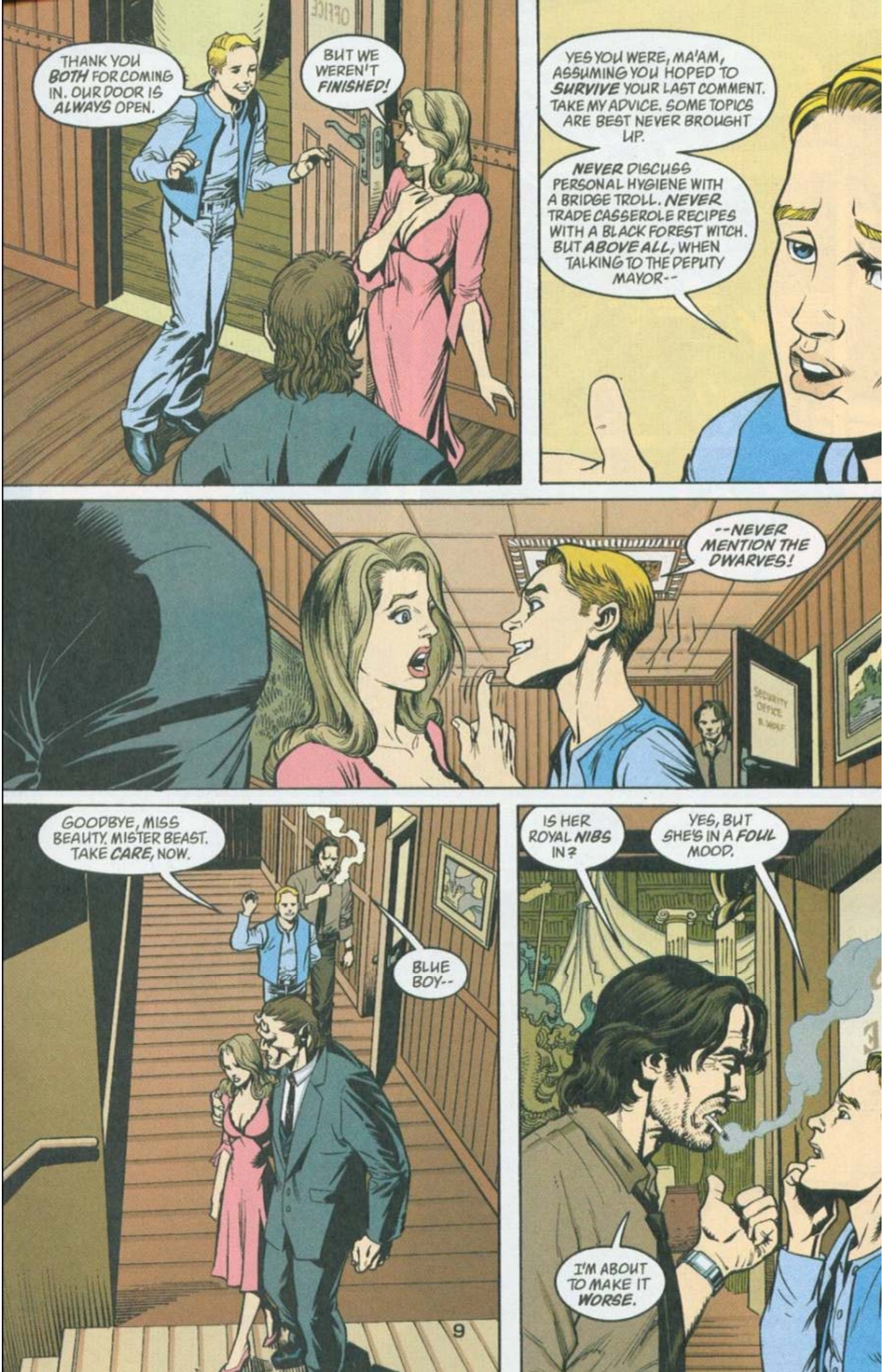

THERE ARE ONLY A HANDFUL OF US WORKING IN THE UNDERGROUND FABLE GOVERNMENT. WE'RE ALREADY SERIOUSLY OVERWORKED AND UNDERPAID, AND IT'S EVERYTHING WE CAN DO TO KEEP OUR EXILE COMMUNITY TOGETHER.
WE DON'T EVEN HAVE THE POWER TO TAX OUR MEMBERS. WE GET BY ON DONATIONS, AND HALF OUR TIME IS SPENT BOWING, SCRAPING AND KISSING ASS TO GET WHAT LITTLE WE CAN BRING IN EACH YEAR.
SO PLEASE BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THAT I CAN'T HELP YOU SORT OUT THIS SITUATION.
BUT YOU AWUNT WEAVY THE MAYOAH.

TRUE. I'M NOT REALLY THE MAYOR OF FABLETOWN, ONLY HIS DEPUTY. AND IF YOU WANT TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO TELL YOUR TALE OF WOE DIRECTLY TO KING COLE, THAT'S YOUR PREROGATIVE.
BUT I'LL TELL YOU RIGHT NOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN. HE'LL LISTEN TO YOU AND MAKE ALL THE RIGHT NOISES ABOUT HOW SORRY HE IS FOR YOUR PLIGHT--AND HIS SYMPATHY WILL BE GENUINE BECAUSE HE'S A WONDERFUL, EMPATHETIC MAN.
AND THEN THE MOMENT YOU'RE OUT THE DOOR, HE'LL ASK ME WHAT I WANT TO DO ABOUT IT, BECAUSE THAT'S HOW WE WORK. HE DOES ALL THE FORMAL GLADHANDING. HE MAKES THE OFFICIAL APPEARANCES AND HOSTS THE CEREMONIAL FUNCTIONS. AND I DO THE REAL WORK OF RUNNING OUR COMMUNITY.

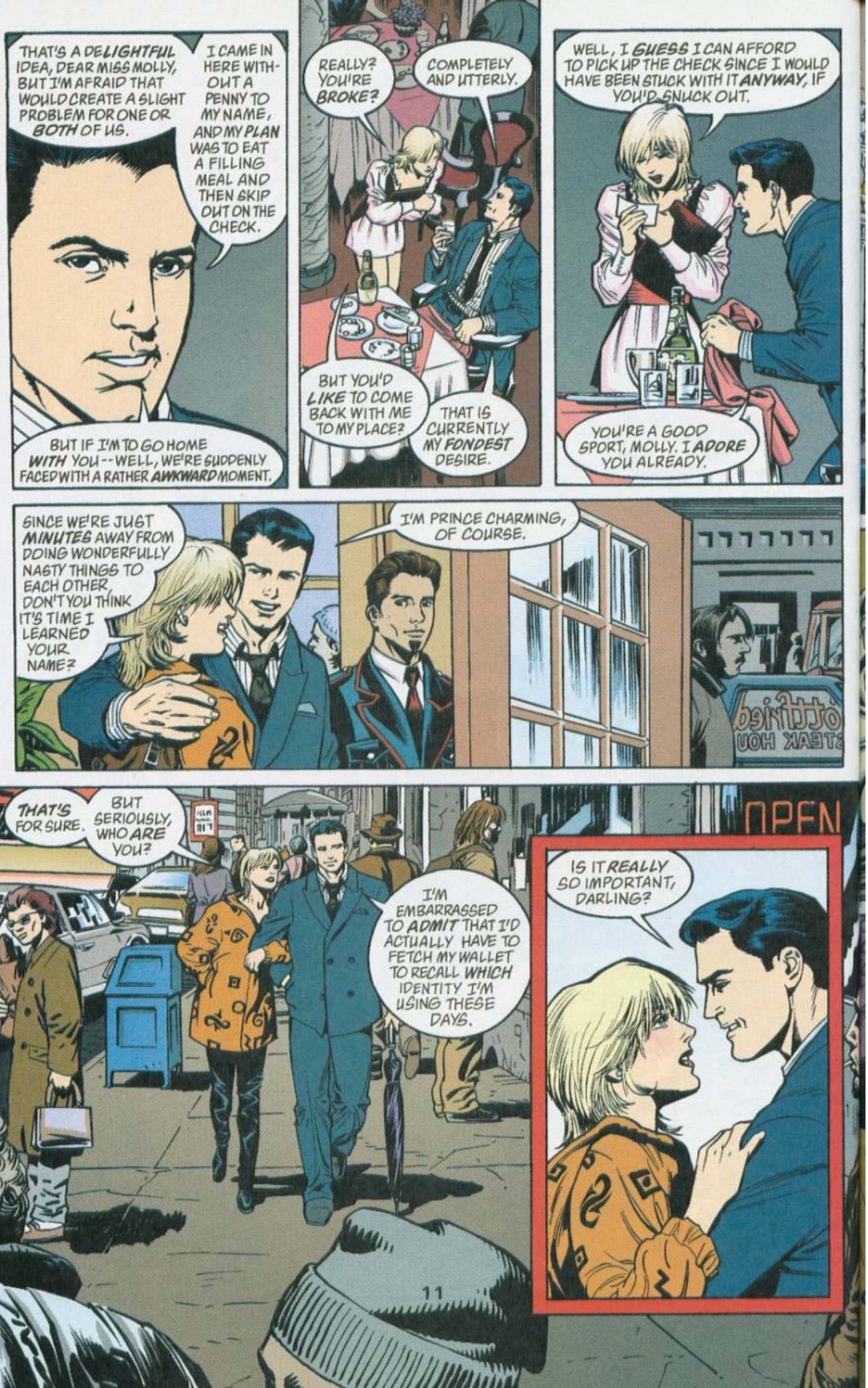
FOR BETTER OR WORSE, YOU'VE JUST HAD YOUR APPEAL TO CITY HALL.
YOU DIVORCED YOUR PRINCE CENTURIES AGO. YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW HARD IT IS TO KEEP A MARRIAGE GOING SO LONG.
NOWAH, DEAH. THEWES NO WEASON TO GET PERSONOAH.
SNOW WHITE
DIRECTOR OF

DON'T GET PERSONAL? AFTER SHE OPENLY CRITICIZED OUR MARRIED LIFE?
I DID NO SUCH THING.
AND JUST WHO IS SHE TO CRITICIZE ANYONE'S PERSONAL LIFE, AFTER WHAT I HEARD ABOUT HER TAWDRY LITTLE ADVENTURE WITH THOSE SEVEN DWARVES?

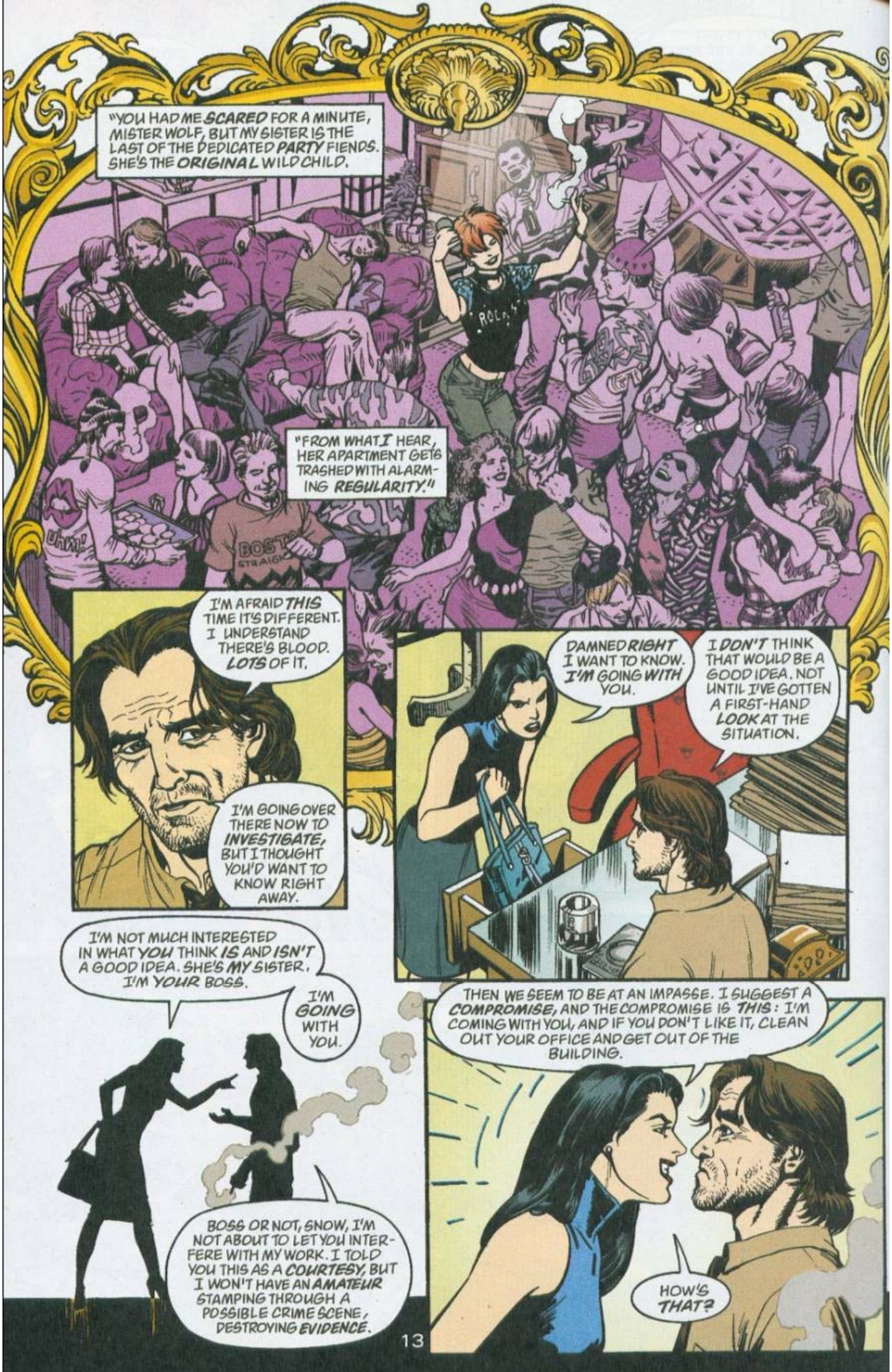
OKAY, FOLKS, BUSINESS IS PILING UP AND WE NEED TO MOVE THINGS ALONG TO MISS WHITE'S NEXT APPOINTMENT.
BUT--?


THANK YOU BOTH FOR COMING IN. OUR DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN.
BUT WE WEREN'T FINISHED!
YES YOU WERE, MA'AM, ASSUMING YOU HOPED TO SURVIVE YOUR LAST COMMENT. TAKE MY ADVICE. SOME TOPICS ARE BEST NEVER BROUGHT UP.
NEVER DISCUSS PERSONAL HYGIENE WITH A BRIDGE TROLL. NEVER TRADE CASSEROLE RECIPES WITH A BLACK FOREST WITCH. BUT ABOVE ALL, WHEN TALKING TO THE DEPUTY MAYOR--
--NEVER MENTION THE DWARVES!
SECURITY OFFICE B. WOLF
GOODBYE, MISS BEAUTY. MISTER BEAST. TAKE CARE, NOW.
BLUE BOY--
IS HER ROYAL NIBS IN?
YES, BUT SHE'S IN A FOUL MOOD.
I'M ABOUT TO MAKE IT WORSE.

ARE YOU ENJOYING YOUR LUNCH, SIR?
VERY MUCH SO. THANK YOU, MOLLY.
Gottfrieds
STEAK HOUSE
AND HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR STEAK?
I SIMPLY LOOKED BEHIND THE POTATO AND THERE IT WAS.
OH MY, THAT'S VERY CLEVER. YOU'RE A DELIGHTFULLY CLEVER MAN. POSITIVELY...
CLEVER?
UHM...YES. SO, WILL THERE BE ANYTHING ELSE, SIR?
NOTHING MORE TO EAT OR DRINK, MISS, BUT WE'VE SHARED SUCH A NICE FLIRTATION THIS AFTERNOON THAT I'M TEMPTED TO ASK YOU FOR YOUR PHONE NUMBER.
I'M TEMPTED TO GIVE IT.
ACTUALLY, I'M ABOUT TO GO OFF SHIFT AND I'M TEMPTED TO ASK YOU TO COME HOME WITH ME RIGHT NOW.


THAT'S A DELIGHTFUL IDEA, DEAR MISS MOLLY, BUT I'M AFRAID THAT WOULD CREATE A SLIGHT PROBLEM FOR ONE OR BOTH OF US.
I CAME IN HERE WITHOUT A PENNY TO MY NAME, AND MY PLAN WAS TO EAT A FILLING MEAL AND THEN SKIP OUT ON THE CHECK.
BUT IF I'M TO GO HOME WITH YOU -- WELL, WE'RE SUDDENLY FACED WITH A RATHER AWKWARD MOMENT.
REALLY? YOU'RE BROKE?
COMPLETELY AND UTTERLY.
BUT YOU'D LIKE TO COME BACK WITH ME TO MY PLACE?
THAT IS CURRENTLY MY FONDEST DESIRE.
WELL, I GUESS I CAN AFFORD TO PICK UP THE CHECK SINCE I WOULD HAVE BEEN STUCK WITH IT ANYWAY, IF YOU'D SNUCK OUT.
YOU'RE A GOOD SPORT, MOLLY. I ADORE YOU ALREADY.
SINCE WE'RE JUST MINUTES AWAY FROM DOING WONDERFULLY NASTY THINGS TO EACH OTHER, DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME I LEARNED YOUR NAME?
I'M PRINCE CHARMING, OF COURSE.
THAT'S FOR SURE.
BUT SERIOUSLY, WHO ARE YOU?
I'M EMBARRASSED TO ADMIT THAT I'D ACTUALLY HAVE TO FETCH MY WALLET TO RECALL WHICH IDENTITY I'M USING THESE DAYS.
OPEN
IS IT REALLY SO IMPORTANT, DARLING?
11

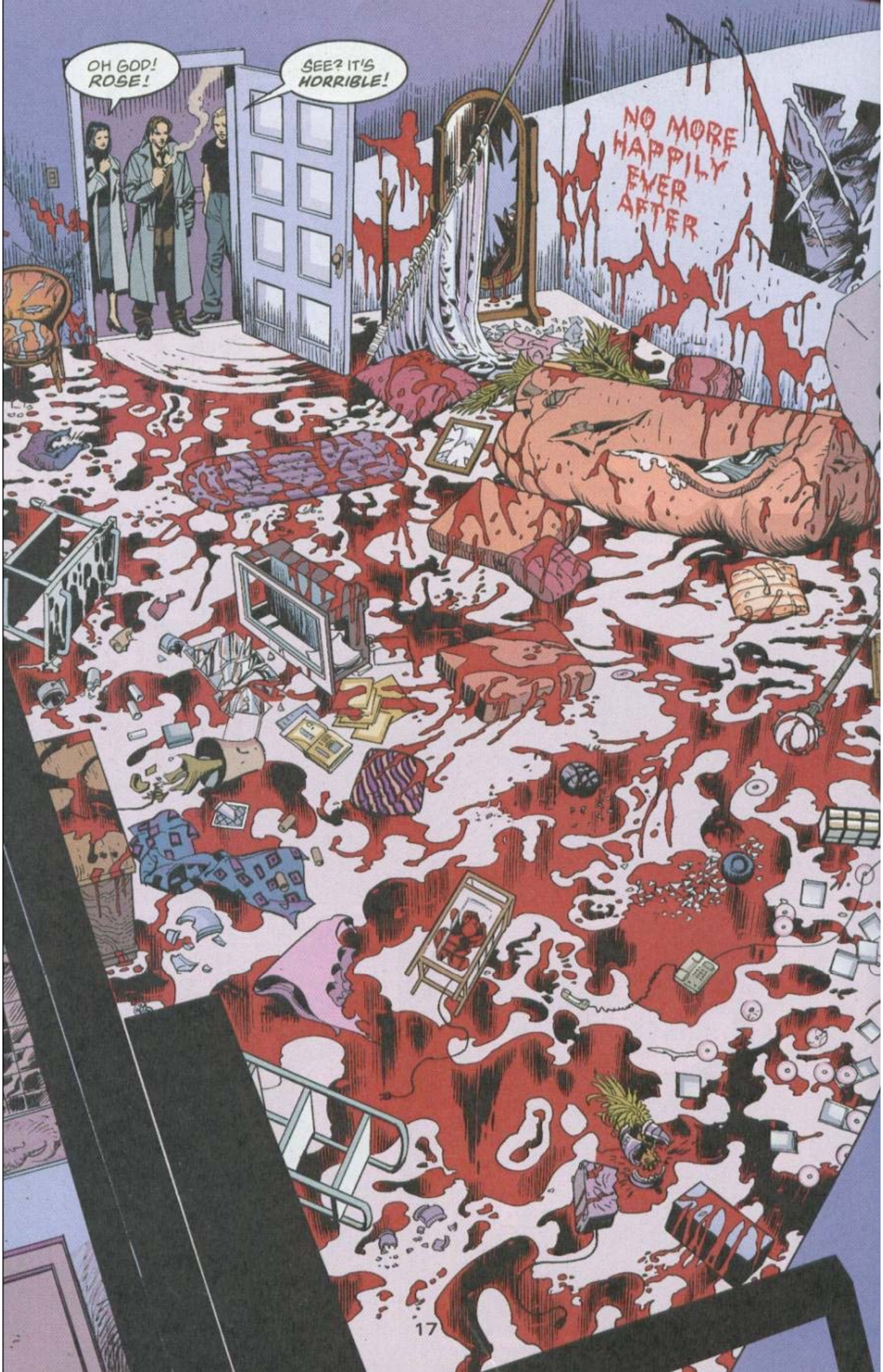
WHAT DO YOU NEED, MISTER WOLF? I'M BUSY RIGHT NOW.
YOU NEED TO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR SOME BAD NEWS, SNOW.
DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC. I ALREADY KNOW. MY EX IS BACK IN TOWN.
THANK YOU FOR NOT SMOKING
SNOW WHITE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
APPARENTLY, HE MANAGED TO FINALLY WEAR OUT HIS WELCOME AMONG EVEN THE MOST INBRED ELEMENTS OF EUROPEAN ROYALTY.
THIS ISN'T ABOUT PRINCE CHARMING. IT'S ABOUT YOUR SISTER, ROSE RED.
THIS MAY SURPRISE YOU, MISTER WOLF, BUT I'M NOT ENTIRELY AN IDIOT. I ACTUALLY KNOW MY SISTER'S NAME.
SO WHAT'S SHE DONE THIS TIME?
I'VE RECEIVED A REPORT--UNCONFIRMED, MIND YOU--THAT SHE'S GONE MISSING. SHE'S POSSIBLY THE VICTIM OF VIOLENCE.
WHAT?
HOW?
HER BOYFRIEND WAS JUST HERE TO REPORT THAT HE'D FOUND HER APARTMENT TRASHED THIS MORNING.
OH, IS THAT ALL?
THANK YOU FOR NOT SMOKING
SNOW WHITE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS


"YOU HAD ME SCARED FOR A MINUTE, MISTER WOLF, BUT MY SISTER IS THE LAST OF THE DEDICATED PARTY FIENDS. SHE'S THE ORIGINAL WILD CHILD.
"FROM WHAT I HEAR, HER APARTMENT GETS TRASHED WITH ALARMING REGULARITY."
UHH!
I'M AFRAID THIS TIME IT'S DIFFERENT. I UNDERSTAND THERE'S BLOOD. LOTS OF IT.
I'M GOING OVER THERE NOW TO INVESTIGATE, BUT I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO KNOW RIGHT AWAY.
DAMNED RIGHT I WANT TO KNOW. I'M GOING WITH YOU.
I DON'T THINK THAT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA. NOT UNTIL I'VE GOTTEN A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT THE SITUATION.
I'M NOT MUCH INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU THINK IS AND ISN'T A GOOD IDEA. SHE'S MY SISTER. I'M YOUR BOSS.
I'M GOING WITH YOU.
BOSS OR NOT, SNOW, I'M NOT ABOUT TO LET YOU INTERFERE WITH MY WORK. I TOLD YOU THIS AS A COURTESY, BUT I WON'T HAVE AN AMATEUR STAMPING THROUGH A POSSIBLE CRIME SCENE, DESTROYING EVIDENCE.
THEN WE SEEM TO BE AT AN IMPASSE. I SUGGEST A COMPROMISE, AND THE COMPROMISE IS THIS: I'M COMING WITH YOU, AND IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, CLEAN OUT YOUR OFFICE AND GET OUT OF THE BUILDING.
HOW'S THAT?

OH!
OH MY!
YES! JUST LIKE THAT!
DO MORE OF THAT!
YOU'RE AMAZING.
I KNOW.
TRICK OR TREAT
PIZZA HOT
I'VE ALWAYS BELIEVED A TRULY ACCOMPLISHED NOBLEMAN SHOULD HONE HIS COCKSMANSHIP EVERY BIT AS MUCH AS HIS SWORDSMANSHIP.
IN EACH CASE ONE SHOULD KNOW WHEN IT'S BETTER TO THRUST OR PARRY OR BIND.
WHEN IT'S TIME TO WITHDRAW OR RIPOSTE.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT RIPOSTE MEANS, BUT DON'T YOU DARE WITHDRAW YET!
AND OF COURSE, WHEN IT'S TIME TO FINALLY COMMIT ALL TO THE--DEEP--LUNGE.
YIPPEE!
MY HERO.

SO WHY DIDN'T JACK STICK AROUND AFTER HE REPORTED THE CRIME?
YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO SMOKE IN THE CAB, SIR.
SIR?
I SENT HIM AHEAD TO GUARD THE CRIME SCENE. I DIDN'T WANT ANYONE MESSING IT UP BEFORE I GOT A LOOK AT IT.
YOU HAD JACK GUARD THE CRIME SCENE? ISN'T THAT LIKE ASKING THE FOX TO GUARD THE HEN HOUSE?
HE'S THE ONLY ONE I CAN TRUST TO KEEP THE SCENE SAFE, SINCE HE'S THE ONE WHO DISCOVERED IT. IF JACK WANTED TO ALTER THE EVIDENCE HE ALREADY DID IT BEFORE HE CAME IN TO REPORT THE CRIME.
AND IF THAT'S THE CASE, HE WON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE COMING ALONG TO FURTHER ALTER HIS ALTERATIONS.
KEEP THE CHANGE.
OH JOY. NOW MY MOTHER CAN GET THAT KIDNEY OPERATION SHE SO DESPERATELY NEEDS.
TAXI
I STILL DON'T TRUST HIM. I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT ROSE SEES IN HIM.
I ALWAYS GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT YOUR OPEN DISAPPROVAL OF JACK WAS THE THING THAT ROSE FOUND MOST ATTRACTIVE IN HIM.

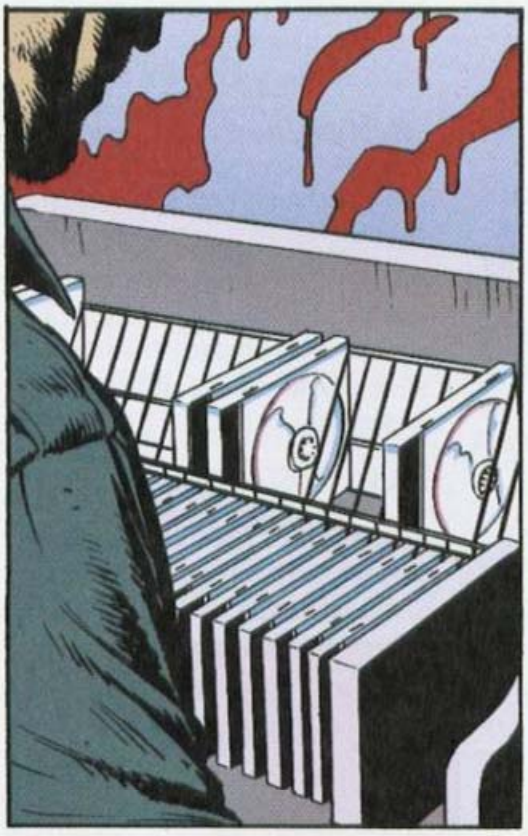
TRUE ENOUGH, I SUPPOSE...
...ROSE AND I HAVE DRIFTED APART OVER THE YEARS...
I WOULDN'T CHARACTERIZE IT AS "DRIFTING." ROSE SEEMS TO HAVE DEDICATED HER LIFE TO DOING WHATEVER WILL CAUSE YOU THE MOST PAIN AND EMBARRASSMENT.
YOU'RE GETTING A BIT NOSY, MISTER WOLF.
I CAN'T HELP BUT NOTICE THINGS, SNOW. I BELIEVE THAT'S WHY YOU HIRED ME AS FABLETOWN'S SHERIFF.
THERE YOU ARE.
EVERYTHING JUST THE WAY YOU LEFT IT, JACK?
HAVEN'T GONE BACK IN YET.
I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE IT A SECOND TIME. IT'S HORRIBLE. YOU'LL SEE.
JUST GET THE DOOR OPEN.


OH GOD! ROSE!
SEE? IT'S HORRIBLE!
NO MORE HAPPILY EVER AFTER

HOLD THIS. I'M GOING TO NEED MY SENSES CLEAR.
BOTH OF YOU STAY HERE.
DO NOT COME IN FOR ANY REASON.
IF SOMEONE COMES, CLOSE THE DOOR AND STAY OUT IN THE HALL.
THIS STAYS STRICTLY AMONG THE FABLE COMMUNITY. NO ONE LETS THE MUNDY COPS IN ON IT.
NO MORE
APPILY
EVER
AFTER
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT THE FLOOR? YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR ROSE! CHECK IN THE BEDROOM TO SEE IF SHE'S IN THERE!
I ALREADY CHECKED. SHE'S NOT HERE.

BOTH OF YOU SHUT UP AND LET ME WORK.
SHE'S MY SISTER!
JACK, IF SHE OPENS HER MOUTH AGAIN, PICK HER UP AND CARRY HER BACK HOME. IF SHE SCREAMS OR RESISTS, YOU HAVE MY PERMISSION TO KNOCK HER SENSE-LESS.
FINE. I GET THE MESSAGE. I'LL KEEP QUIET-- FOR NOW.
LAY ONE HAND ON ME, ASSHOLE, AND YOU'LL REGRET IT.

lose



Crisis in Love Songs

AH HA.

JACK, I'M TAKING YOU IN.
WHAT FOR?
DOES IT MATTER? LET'S CALL IT RESISTING ARREST.
BUT I DIDN'T!
YOU POWER-MAD FUCKSHIT!
SEE?
OW!
NOW I CAN ADD ATTEMPTED ASSAULT TO THE CHARGES.
YOU'VE OCCASIONALLY BEEN CLEVER, JACK...
...BUT NEVER SMART.
OW!
THIS IS ABUSE OF AUTHORITY! AND I GOT A WITNESS!
SHUT UP, JACK, BEFORE I THINK OF OTHER CHARGES TO STACK AGAINST YOU.
IS HE THE ONE?
WE'LL SEE.
NEXT: THE (UN)USUAL SUSPECTS